

as a member of the County Recorder's Association of California from 2001–2012. She also was a member of the California Assessors' Association from 2007–2012 and the Bay Area Assessor's Association 2007–2012, serving as its president in 2010. She has been a member of the Sonoma County Historical Records Commission since 2000 and is recognized throughout the state for her knowledge of the California Elections Code and voting procedures.

Ms. Atkinson is a longtime supporter of the Cloverdale Boys and Girls Club and served as the lead public information officer for Sonoma County during disasters, providing vital information to those impacted by floods, mudslides and fires.

Mr. Speaker, Janice Atkinson has a long and distinguished career in service to Sonoma County and it is therefore appropriate that we acknowledge her today and wish her well in her retirement.

CONGRATULATING THE INTERMOUNTAIN JEWISH NEWS ON ITS 100TH YEAR

HON. CORY GARDNER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Intermountain Jewish News on its 100th year of continuous publication.

The Intermountain Jewish News has served as an important conduit of information for people of the Jewish faith across the Rocky Mountain West. With insightful reporting and a keen eye to the stories that matter most to its readers, it has provided the Jewish community with relevant news and a constant connection to the community.

Freedom of the press and freedom of religion are two of the pillars that have made the United States the beacon of light across the world. The Intermountain Jewish News is more than just the product of these freedoms; it is the medium through which these freedoms live on today.

I applaud the hard work and dedication of all who have contributed to this publication's success over the past 100 years and I wish them continued success in the future.

IN SUPPORT OF THE FORWARD ON CLIMATE RALLY FEBRUARY 14, 2013

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join President Obama and concerned citizens around the world to say it is high time we move forward on addressing climate change.

As President Obama said in his State of the Union address: "We can choose to believe that Superstorm Sandy, and the most severe drought in decades, and the worst wildfires some states have ever seen were all just a freak coincidence. Or we can choose to believe in the overwhelming judgment of science—and act before it's too late."

This weekend, tens of thousands of people—including 100 buses from over 30 states—will be traveling to Washington, DC to participate in Sunday's Forward on Climate Rally to demonstrate their support for action on climate change.

My home state of Maryland knows all too well the devastating effects of extreme weather events, and the threat that coastal flooding and sea level rise present to our coastal communities. In that regard, I'm proud that Maryland is tackling this issue head on by committing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent below 2006 levels by 2020. In addition to restoring a healthy climate, this initiative will boost economic growth, create jobs and save consumers money.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Forward on Climate Rally to the nation's capital, and I stand with concerned citizens from across the country who say the time is now to address climate change.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO REFORM THE FEDERAL PROTECTIVE SERVICE

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to improve the level of security provided by the Federal Protective Service, FPS.

Formed in 1971 as the uniformed protection service for the General Service Administration, GSA, the Federal Protective Service's mission is to safeguard the Federal buildings that Americans access every day across the country. FPS is charged with protecting over 9,000 Federal facilities, including many of our own Congressional district offices.

Since FPS was transferred to the Department of Homeland Security in 2003, a series of government audits have uncovered major breaches in the security services FPS provides and attributed these lapses, in large part, to slipshod oversight by the agency of its contractor workforce.

One glaring example of FPS's lapses in providing security occurred in February 2011 when contract guards failed to detect explosive material that was left undetected inside the Patrick V. McNamara Federal building in Detroit for 21 days.

Testifying on July 13, 2011 about this incident before the Committee on Homeland Security, the Government Accountability Office, GAO, stated that FPS needs to undertake a stronger role in overseeing contractor performance, to reevaluate its hiring and training practices for contract guards, and to implement a comprehensive risk assessment strategy.

On July 24, 2012, at a subsequent Committee on Homeland Security hearing, FPS's lack of a comprehensive risk management strategy was identified as a major obstacle to FPS' ability to safeguard Federal facilities and effectively serve as the lead agency charged with coordinating infrastructure protection government-wide.

Both hearings addressed the Federal Protective Service's pressing need to replace the failed Risk Assessment and Management Program, RAMP, to monitor the hours and duties

performed by contract guards—which has cost of over \$41 million—with an effective tool to implement risk assessment. As an interim step, FPS has since developed the Modified Infrastructure Survey Too, MIST.

Since May 2007, the Committee on Homeland Security has held five oversight hearings of FPS. Additionally, since 2008, GAO has issued seven oversight reports, at my request, on the agency that identified a wide range of challenges FPS faces in protecting Federal facilities. Among the areas for reform identified in these reports are the need for increased oversight of the contract guard program; the need for FPS to implement a risk management strategy to improve facility security; enhanced schedule and cost estimating practices to facilitate the transition of management functions; and a comprehensive approach to human capital management.

The legislation I am reintroducing today: (1) seeks to increase security at Federal facilities by adding 500 more Federal Law Enforcement Officers; (2) directs FPS to intensify its monitoring of contract guards; (3) requires national minimum standards for the training and certification of contract guard staff; (4) requires that security standards for Federal facilities established by the Interagency Security Committee be implemented; (5) directs FPS to conduct a 1-year pilot program to assess whether a Federal Security Guard that is a Federal employee would do a better job protecting the highest risk Federal facilities than a contract guard; (6) requires a law enforcement presence at the highest risk Federal facilities; and (7) directs the Government Accountability Office to investigate the adequacy of the fee-based funding system utilized by FPS and determine whether it prevents the agency from fully executing its security mission.

Under my legislation, the FPS' inspector corps would be increased to 1,350, thereby elevating the Federal law enforcement presence inside Federal buildings by offering "boots on the ground" security expertise.

I strongly believe that a more robust inspector workforce would, for the first time, provide FPS with a core of specialized security personnel with the training and authority required to create long-overdue change within the entire organization.

My legislation also calls for dedicated contract oversight staff to oversee the performance of contract guards; this would allow FPS inspectors focus on their security and law enforcement duties and not be bogged down in contract-management concerns.

Similarly, my legislation would require a law enforcement presence at the highest risk Federal facilities, which directly addresses a gap in the current system, where contract guards, who lack arrest authority are charged with protecting high-profile Federal facilities.

I introduced similar legislation in the 111th and 112th Congresses to ensure that the Federal Protective Service fulfills its responsibility to coordinate infrastructure protection across the Federal government, and to make certain that effective management procedures are implemented to hold contractors accountable for the hiring, training and certification of security guards who are charged with protecting Federal facilities.

It has been 18 years since the Alfred P. Murrah building was attacked in Oklahoma City. We have been fortunate that an attack of this magnitude has not occurred against a